operation since 1982 at Shimla and the passports are issued from PRO, Chandigarh. At the PACC, Shimla in the last three years the number of applications received has been 1271 in 1997, 1261 in 1998 and 1226 in 1999 which does not meet the norms recommended by the Standing Committee for opening a full fledged Passport Office.

VHP Application to UN social council for consultative status as NGO

2098. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has applied to the United Nations Social Council for consultative status as a Non-Governmental Organisation;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Pakistan had objected to this and if so, on what grounds; and

(c) what action Government have taken/propose to take to defend the VHP from the Pakistani propaganda and assist it in getting the NGO status?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir; it is understood that the Vishwa Hindu Parishad has applied for grant of consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as a Non-Governmental Organisation. In accordance with the established procedure, the application of VHP for grant of consultative status is being considered by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations set up by the ECOSOC. Clarifications sought by members of the NGO Committee have been provided by the Organisation.

Officers deputed to International Organisations after Retirement

2099. DR. MAHESH CHANDRA SHARMA:
SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of officers of the rank of Joint Secretary and above who were officially deputed to world/international organisations before or after their retirement during the last three years with names and designations; and